

# Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission

## Annual Activity Report: PY 2007-2008

### Special points of interest:

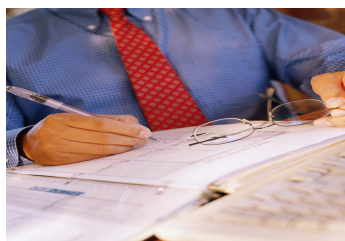
- **About the Commission, Page 6.**
- **Transportation Planning Activities, Page 2.**
- **Comprehensive Planning, Zoning, Land Use and Flood Plain Management Activities, Page 3.**
- **Census, Development Planning and Outreach, Page 4.**
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### Year Marked by Anniversary and Many Activities

Highlighting the Commission's efforts over the past year is exciting in that the period marked several new efforts as well as an important celebration of past ones.

In March, 1957, the Sangamon County Planning Commission was born and was followed that June by the joint group known as the Springfield Plan Commission. According to the 1959 Annual Report, "while two separate official Commissions exist on paper, they meet and operate jointly as one and are served by one staff. All committees are made up of both City and County representatives for members realize that problems of the City are also problems of the County and vice versa."

By 1966 the two Commissions



had joined forces, and, as the list of Commission members below suggests, the Commission continues to jointly address the planning needs of the region to this day.

During this past program year the Commission staff has worked to address joint and separate planning problems, including those involving comprehensive and strategic planning, land use and environmental planning, transportation planning, and development planning. As this brief report will indicate, the Commission and its staff have continued to carry out the

regular duties they are assigned, but have also been involved in such regional efforts as the development of a Human Services Transportation Plan and a Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan, and such local efforts as assisting in the review and re-writing of Springfield's Land Subdivision Ordinance and helping the Village of Sherman develop a new comprehensive plan.

This report represents just a summary of the Commission's work over the past 12 months; the 2007-2008 Program Year. We believe it demonstrates that the Commission continues to effectively and efficiently meet the charge it was given in 1957 to cooperatively address the planning needs of the region.

### Commission Members: 2007-2008 (Official Representative as Noted)

#### Officers and Members of the Executive Policy Board:

**Mr. Lawrence Eastep**, Chairman,  
Citizen Member.

**Mr. Eric Hansen**, Vice Chairman,  
Citizen member.

**Mr. Claudio Pecori**, Secretary,  
Citizen Member.

**Hon. Tim Davlin**, Mayor, City of  
Springfield. (Mr. Mike Farmer)

**Hon. Andy Van Meter**, Chairman,  
Sangamon Co. Board. (Mr. Ryan  
McCrady)

**Mr. Larry Hamlin**, Citizen Member.

#### Other Commission Members:

**Hon. Sam Cahnman**, Alderman,  
Springfield. (Mr. Joe Davis).

**Hon. Andy Goleman**, Member,  
Sangamon Co. Board. (Mr. Charlie  
Stratton).

**Hon. Frank Lesko**, Alderman,  
Springfield.

**Hon. Tim Moore**, Member, Sanga-  
mon Co. Board. (Mr. Don Barber).

**Ms. Leslie Sgro**, President, Spring-  
field Park District. (Mr. Chris  
Perrin).

**Mr. Frank Vala**, Chairman, Spring-

field Airport Authority. (Mr. Roger  
Blickensderfer).

**Mr. Frank Squires**, Chairman,  
Springfield Mass Transit District.  
(Ms. Linda Tisdale or Mr. Dick Aus-  
tin).

**Mr. Dick Ciotti**, Chairman, Spring-  
field Metro Sanitary District. (Mr.  
Gregg Humphrey).

**Ms. Erin Conley**, Chair, Springfield  
School District 186. (Mr. Dave  
Smith).

**Mr. Michael Galco**, Citizen Mem-  
ber.

## Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission



### Transportation Planning & SATS

Addressing the transportation needs of the public was one of the major goals of the Commission during the past year. As the recognized Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for this area, the Commission provides staff support to the Springfield Area Transportation Study (SATS) and is a voting member of the SATS Policy and Technical Committees.

During the past year the Commission worked on an extensive amendment to the 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan, which was approved by SATS in July 2007.

As MPO, the Commission staff developed and provided the annual updates for both the SATS Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the required Unified Planning Work Program. Commission staff have also been involved in developing a project prioritization system for the area.

During the past year Commission staff also completed work on the 2007 Downtown Parking Survey. This spring initial work on the 2008 Parking Survey was completed and the preparation of the survey results is currently underway but show an increase of 150 parking spots since 2007.

An extremely important component of our transportation planning effort also began this year with the solicitation of proposals for development of a Travel Demand Model for the region. This county-wide model, which is expected to be in place by early 2009, will allow Commission staff to project travel demand and identify potential transportation problem areas, as well as solutions to those problems, when considering new development projects. Planning Commission staff will manage the project, provide data, and receive training on the use and maintenance of the model.



### Transit District Support & Human Services Transportation Planning

During the past year the Planning Commission staff continued to assist the Springfield Mass Transit District (SMTD) by providing data analysis, main bus schedule updates, individual route brochure updates, other marketing materials and efforts, and planning support. This planning support included assistance in developing information needed for the District's application for funds supporting SMTD's new multi-modal facility,

and the Planning Commission's Executive Director facilitated an initial strategic planning session for SMTD's board.

The Planning Commission also continues to coordinate the Springfield Urbanized Area (SUA) Human Services Transportation Plan (HSTP) Advisory Committee. The HSTP is intended to address the needs of special and underserved populations that may be

largely dependent on public transit to travel to jobs and needed services. On Dec. 20, 2007, this committee endorsed the SUA HSTP developed by the Planning Commission staff. The committee continues to review projects and grant applications to help ensure coordination and efficiency of transit services. Planning Commission staff also serve as committee members for the Region 7 rural HSTP Committee.

### Crash Data Analysis

While there are several goals to be met in local transportation planning, addressing the safety needs of the public is one of the most important.

During the past year the Planning Commission staff took part in a multi-jurisdictional effort to help

address this goal by identifying and locating the coordinates of over 500 incapacitating and fatal motor vehicle crashes in Sangamon County. This was done as part of the Illinois Department of Transportation's Local Crash Data Collection Program.

While analysis of this data is ongoing, the SSCRPC staff was one of the first in the state to locate crash site data and input the coordinates into the project system. This project will be extremely useful in future years as priorities are established for roadway improvements.

## 2007-2008 Program Year

### Comprehensive and Strategic Planning

Developing a comprehensive plan may be one of the most valuable efforts a municipality undertakes because it is an investment in the community. During the past year Commission staff worked to complete one local community's new comprehensive plan and started the development of a larger, regional plan.

At the time of this reporting, the comprehensive plan for the Village

of Sherman is almost complete. Staff have completed the land use inventory, a local needs and interests survey, analyzed the survey and presented the results to the village board, and are currently working on the proposed land use plan component.

Sangamon County and Springfield leaders have also identified the need for a new regional comprehensive plan. Springfield currently

operates under a plan adopted in 2000 and the County under policy guidelines that are much older.

It was hoped that state funding would be provided for a regional planning effort, but this funding was not realized. Instead the Commission is using new state planning funds recently provided to MPO's to begin the planning process. Data collection for this project is underway.



### Zoning and Tract Survey Review

Most are aware that Planning Commission staff review zoning petitions for the City of Springfield and Sangamon County. What is not as well known is that the Executive Director also oversees the Sangamon County Department of Zoning and Building Safety, which not only addresses zoning in the County but also building permits and liquor licenses.

In addition to the regular work of this department, during the past year Commission staff provided professional staff reviews and

opinions on 172 City of Springfield and Sangamon County zoning cases, or about 14 cases each month. Staff must review the petition, identify surrounding uses and determine if the requirements of the ordinances are met.

Related to land use, the Executive Director of the SSCRPC also serves as the County Plat Officer and reviews tract surveys for approval. Each of the 163 tract surveys submitted this past year were reviewed to ensure compliance with the Illinois State Plat Act,

Springfield and Sangamon County zoning ordinances, and survey requirements.

Copies of recorded plats are returned to the Commission and sent to the County Assessor's Office where they are reviewed and assessment records updated. At that time property owners who did not obtain Plat Officer approval are identified and the property owners notified of the violation and informed as to how the violation may be corrected.

### Flood Plain Management

The Commission acts as floodplain administrator for Sangamon County and Springfield. On a weekly basis the Commission handles numerous requests from property owners, insurance agents and mortgage lenders who inquire if a property is within a floodplain. As part of this work the staff must also review and issue Floodplain Development Permits for property owners seeking to alter the topography of land within the floodplain. Only six were ap-

proved this year.

Sangamon County residents who own property in or near a floodplain benefit from participation in the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Community Rating System (CRS) program, which is administered locally by Commission staff. This program results in lower insurance premiums under the National Flood Insurance Program based on the community's CRS class rating. Sangamon County is currently rated Class 8,

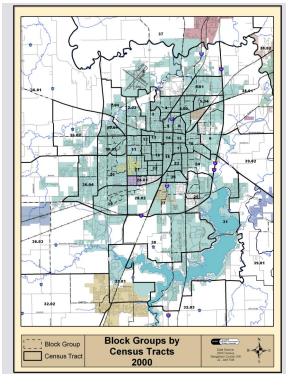
resulting in a 10% insurance rate reduction for structures contained in the floodplain and a 5% reduction for structures not in the floodplain.

Maintaining the class rating requires various communication and outreach activities to be completed by SSCRPC staff on an annual basis. In the Fall of 2007, over 3000 letters were mailed to property owners to inform them that all or part of their property was within a floodplain.



# Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission

## Census Planning & Analysis



During the year Commission staff has provided such assistance as;

- **Helping the Sangamon County Public Health Department map positive rabies cases by county;**
- **Assisting the Pleasant Plains School District's Planning Committee assess the impact of growth on the school district.**
- **Assisting Springfield School District 186's Facilities Planning Committee in its review of the district's building needs.**
- **Reviewing the new aerial photography, planimetrics, and other data provided by the 2007 Aerial Flyover.**

Good local and regional planning requires that the Commission continue its work to maintain an accurate assessment of population growth in the region so as to better address the public's needs. This population assessment drives much of the work of the Commission, influencing strategic and comprehensive, transportation, economic and environmental planning. Throughout the year Commission staff are called upon to do population estimates and analyze census data.

While the official US Census is still two years away, Commission staff

are already at work preparing for it. For example, during the past year the staff assisted in the Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) project, which is a decennial census geographic partnership program that allows the US Bureau of the Census to benefit from local knowledge when developing the Master Address File for the 2010 census. This contributes to a more complete and accurate census through a review of the list of housing unit and group quarter addresses that the Census Bureau will use to deliver questionnaires within the communities the Com-

mission serves.

Since the census takes into account municipal jurisdictions, it is also important that the Census Bureau have accurate jurisdictional boundaries. To assist with this, the Commission staff was involved in the Census Boundary and Annexation Survey, updating municipal boundaries for the City of Springfield.

Of course the Census of Population is not the only census that is done by the Bureau, and Commission staff also assisted with outreach activities for the Census of Businesses being done this year.

## Development Planning

A large part of the Commission's efforts center around the analysis and review of development projects in Springfield and unincorporated Sangamon County. The Commission's responsibilities are spelled out by local ordinances relating to land subdivision or large scale development, and is largely done through the work of the staff and the Commission's Land Subdivision Committee.

Between July 1, 2007, and June 5, 2008, the Commission's Land Subdivision Committee reviewed 58 development projects, or about five each month.

One of the significant efforts of the staff this past year was to provide assistance to a committee of the Springfield Chamber's Quantum 5 Partnership in reviewing and updating the Springfield Land Subdivision Ordinance. This pub-

lic-private partnership has been working for over a year to update and streamline the city's development regulations.

A more recent component of this effort was the establishment of a committee to consider a road impact fee ordinance for Springfield. The Commission's Executive Director serves on this committee and the Commission is providing assistance to it.

## Outreach & Education

Among the efforts that the Commission believes vitally important is to educate the public concerning planning issues that affect them. This program year the Commission staff members were involved in a number of such efforts including:

— The **Great Streets, Great Neighborhoods** photo project that asked residents to tell us what they would like to see in-

cluded in plans for the region (see item on page 5).

— The celebration of **National Bike to Work Day** (May 16) as "Curb Your Car" day in Springfield. "Curb Your Car" is a good example of the Commission's outreach efforts, as it reinforced the link between good planning and urban design and improving public health and the local environment while reducing energy

use.

— The development of a **demonstration rain garden** in cooperation with the Springfield Park District and Cooperative Extension's Master Gardener Program. This initiative has received two grants and a rain garden sized for a typical home will soon be located near the botanical garden in Washington Park.





## 2007-2008 Program Year

## Regional Natural Hazard Mitigation Planning

In July 2007 the Federal Emergency Management Agency awarded the Commission a \$46,167 grant to develop a multi-jurisdictional plan to lessen the impact of natural hazard events on the residents of Sangamon County.

The general public and representatives of 19 communities and the County, along with such special jurisdictions as the Springfield Park District, Mass Transit District, Medical District, and Sanitary

District, and such special partners as the Red Cross, participated in a Task Force to develop the plan.

Public participation was strongly encouraged through a website, a citizen survey, displays, newspaper and radio coverage, special mailings, and public input at task force meetings.

After assessing the risks due to dam failures, drought, earthquake, extreme heat, flooding, mine subsidence, severe storms, and tornadoes, a comprehensive list of miti-

gation activities was developed.

After the regional plan is approved by FEMA, each community will adopt their own plan, making them eligible to apply for FEMA grant funding for eligible projects included in their plans.

A workgroup has been established through the Commission to perform the annual plan reviews and five-year updates. The Village of Rochester will facilitate the workgroup with assistance from the Village of Thayer.



**FINANCES:** Receipts and Disbursements, December 1, 2006 through November 30, 2007. Does not include Sangamon County Department of Zoning and Building Safety.

**RECEIPTS:**

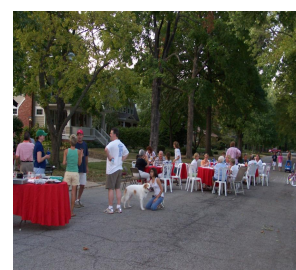
Beginning Balance (12/01/06)	\$ 65,648.00
Sangamon County	
General Planning	103,261.98
Fringe Benefits	140,150.02
Boards & Committees	8,100.00
Cost Allocation	98,488.00
City of Springfield	167,764.27
Springfield Area Transportation Study	
State of Illinois	194,343.54
Sangamon County	21,863.65
City of Springfield	21,863.65
Village of Chatham	4,858.57
Mass Transit Study	
State of Illinois (FTA)	62,366.37
Spfld Mass Transit District	15,832.19
Marketing Materials (Work Task #314)	
Spfld Mass Transit District	14,418.81
Springfield Park District	1,500.00
Western Illinois Regional Council	2,500.00
Village of Sherman	3,246.23
Reimbursed Expenses	<u>874.84</u>

**TOTAL RECEIPTS** **\$927,080.12**

**DISBURSEMENTS:**

Personnel	\$445,157.46
Part-time Personnel	7,686.00
Boards & Committees	8,100.00
Fringe Benefits	140,150.02
Office Supplies	2,511.04
Printing	71.80
Exempt Printing	2,226.87
Meetings & Dues	4,469.00
Travel & Mileage	3,958.94
Equipment Maintenance	375.00
Publications	2,925.38
Postage	4,609.67
Building Rental	45,600.00
Contractual Services (Regular)	8,827.49
New Equipment	3,685.49
Cost Allocation	<u>98,488.00</u>

**TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS** **\$778,842.16**



Participants taking part in the Commission's "Great Streets, Great Neighborhoods" photo project pointed to the importance of neighborhood activities, such as that shown in the submitted photo above. About 40 photos were submitted, with four selected as representative of the four planning themes that seemed most important to submitters: Aesthetics, Neighborhood, Heritage and Maintenance.



SSCRPC

Springfield  
Sangamon County Regional  
Planning Commission

200 South 9th Street, Room 212  
Springfield, Illinois 62701-1629

Phone: 217-535-3110

Fax: 217-535-3111

E-mail: [sscrpc@co.sangamon.il.us](mailto:sscrpc@co.sangamon.il.us)

Visit us on the web at:

[www.co.sangamon.il.us/  
departments/regionalplanning/  
planning.asp](http://www.co.sangamon.il.us/departments/regionalplanning/planning.asp)

**Planning today for  
the most vital and  
livable  
communities of  
tomorrow.**

## About the Springfield-Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission (SSCRPC)

The SSCRPC serves as the joint planning body for the City of Springfield and Sangamon County. The Planning Commission also works with other public and semi-public agencies throughout the area to promote orderly growth and redevelopment, and assists other Sangamon County communities with their planning needs.

The Commission has 17 members including representatives from the Sangamon County Board, Springfield City Council, special units of government, and 6 appointed citizens from the city and county. The Executive Director is appointed by the Executive Board of the Commission.

The Planning Commission, through its professional staff, provides overall planning services related to land use, housing, recreation, transportation, economics, environment, and special projects. It also houses the Sangamon County Department of Zoning and Building Safety which oversees zoning, building permits and code, and liquor licensing for the county.

The Commission prepares area-wide planning documents and assists the county, cities, and villages, as well as special districts, with planning activities. The staff reviews all proposed subdivisions and makes recommendations on all Springfield and Sangamon County zoning and variance requests. The agency serves as the Floodplain Administrator, Census coordinator, and local A-95 review clearinghouse to process and review all federally funded applications for the county. The agency also maintains existing base maps, census tract maps, township and zoning maps and the road name map for the county.

The Planning Commission's Executive Director is also the Plats Officer for Sangamon County. Divisions of land must be reviewed by the Plats Officer to insure compliance with the State Plat Act and local zoning and subdivision regulations.

### Administrative Staff

**Norm Sims**, Executive Director  
**Susan Poludniak**, Assistant Director  
**Mark Jones**, Principal Planner, Mapping & Data  
**Mary Jane Niemann**, Account Technician  
**Shirley Blankenship**, Clerk

### Planning Staff

**Linda Wheeland**, Senior Planner, Transportation Planning  
**Dale Schultz**, Associate Planner, Transportation Planning  
**Joe Zeibert**, Principal Planner, Development Planning & GIS Coordinator  
**Molly Berns**, Senior Planner, Land Use Planning  
**Abby Johnson**, Associate Planner, Land Use Planning  
**Jeff Fulgenzi**, Principal Planner, Comprehensive & Strategic Planning

### Zoning & Building Staff

**Randy Armstrong**, Zoning Administrator.  
**Mike Ashenfelter**, Code Enforcement Officer.  
**Leonard LeVeque**, Code Enforcement Officer.  
**Mike Smith**, Code Enforcement Officer.  
**Brian Schackmann**, Liquor Code Enforcement Officer.  
**Cyndi Knowles**, Zoning Inspector.  
**Jane Lewis**, Clerk-Typist II.  
**Jeanne Melton**, Clerk-Typist II.  
**Susan Taylor**, Clerk-Typist.

### Committees & Formal Linkages

**Sangamon County:** Land Use Advisory Board, Historic Preservation Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Local Emergency Planning Committee, 2007 Aerial Flyover Committee.

**City of Springfield:** Historic Sites Commission, Planning and Zoning Commission, Road Impact Fee Advisory Committee, Springfield Green, Lincoln Bicentennial Committee.

**SSCRPC:** Land Subdivision Committee, Springfield Area Transportation Study.

**State:** Region 7 Regional Transportation Committee, Illinois Greenways and Trails Council, Illinois Association of Regional Councils, Illinois MPO Council, APA Illinois.

**Other:** SMTD Disabled Persons Advisory Committee, Downtown Springfield Inc., Route 66 Trail Executive Council, Illinois Greenways and Trails Council, Economic Development Council of Springfield & Sangamon County, Quantum 5 Partnership, Illinois Medical District at Springfield.

